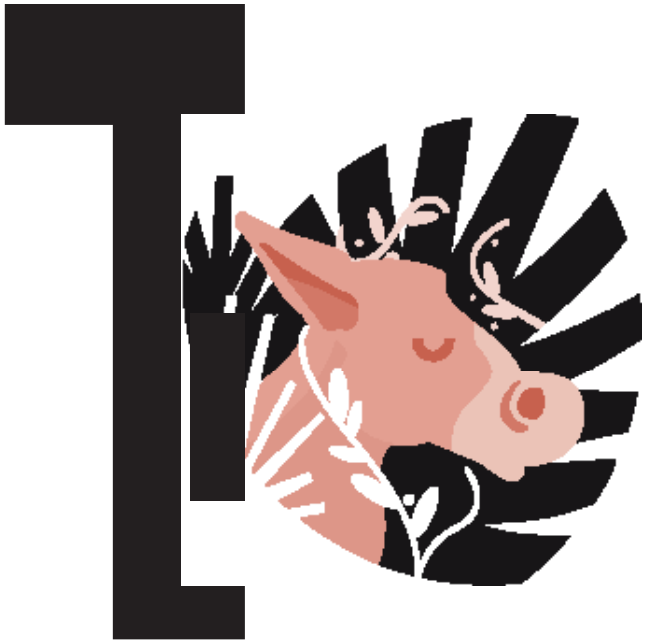


Unit .26

Session .01

Jesus Enters Jerusalem

Scripture

Luke 19:35-46

35 Then they brought it to Jesus, and after throwing
their clothes on the colt, they helped Jesus get on it.
36 As he was going along, they were spreading their
clothes on the road. **37** Now he came near the path
down the Mount of Olives, and the whole crowd of
the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud
voice for all the miracles they had seen: **38 Blessed is
the King who comes in the name of the Lord.** Peace
in heaven and glory in the highest heaven! **39** Some
of the Pharisees from the crowd told him, "Teacher,
rebuke your disciples." **40** He answered, "I tell you,
if they were to keep silent, the stones would cry out."
41 As he approached and saw the city, he wept for it,
42 saying, "If you knew this day what would bring
peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. **43** For
the days will come on you when your enemies will
build a barricade around you, surround you, and hem
you in on every side. **44** They will crush you and your
children among you to the ground, and they will not
leave one stone on another in your midst, because you
did not recognize the time when God visited you."
45 He went into the temple and began to throw out
those who were selling, **46** and he said, "It is written,
my house will be a house of prayer, but you have
made it **a den of thieves!**"

Intro Options

Main Point:
Jesus came to restore true worship.

Option 1

Your students are to create a production entitled, "Good Praise for the Wrong Reasons." They can make a poster, a comic strip, a short skit, a short radio play (audio only), or even a pantomime act. It can be a comedy, a drama, or a tragedy. It can be set in the sports world, in the music world, in the family, in theater, wherever. The important thing is that whatever they produce has to show someone receiving (or giving praise) for ostensibly good reasons, but ultimately for the wrong reasons.

For example, they might show a woman being praised by her boss at work; the woman has worked hard, but in actuality, she's being praised only because the boss has a crush on her. A runner might be praised for her winning the championship, but the praise for her is actually because they're just glad the former champion was removed.

Once students have prepared and shown their production, ask them if it's good to praise Jesus. Ask if and how someone could praise Jesus for the wrong reasons. In today's lesson, people will praise Jesus as He enters Jerusalem, but we'll see that their reasons were not, after all, good oness.

Option 2

Imagine some missionaries have pressed into a remote area and found an undiscovered people group. One of the oddities they discover is that this newly-found people group does not cry; for whatever reason, their culture has never developed tears. The people want to know why other cultures cry. The missionary group has asked your student group to create visual aids to help the missionaries explain why people cry. Your students should come up with reasons people cry and then create simple cartoon-like drawings that can help this newly-found people group understand why people cry.

Bonus round: if you have additional time or a large group, you can also say the newly-found people group wants to know why God would cry. Once again, your student group is to create visual aids, but this time to show why God (and Jesus) weeps or mourns.

See what your students come up with. If they didn't do the bonus round addition, ask them what might make Jesus cry. In today's lesson, as Jesus approached Jerusalem in what we call the Triumphal Entry, He will not be celebrating; in fact, He'll be weeping. Let's see why.

TEACHING PLAN

Read Luke 19:35-40.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all present the ministry of Jesus as leading up to its high point of Jesus entering into the capital city. The scene surrounding Jesus' entering into Jerusalem was pretty amazing, especially considering what would happen in a few days from then. We see the red carpet was rolled out. Jesus, the long-awaited anointed One had finally come. In recognition of the occasion, and thus fulfilling one of many prophecies about the Messiah (Zech. 9:9), the crowd of disciples recognized Jesus' kingly position by praising Him in the words of Psalm 118:26. The Pharisees, a group of religious elites, however, objected to the proceedings and praises. Jesus told them that the stones would cry out if the people did not worship Him. In essence, Jesus was saying that He will be worshiped, and rightly so—He is the prophesied Messiah-King; He is God.

- **Why is Jesus deserving of your affection and praise?**

God created people as worshipers. Every single person on earth is worshiping something today. Some worship Jesus. Some worship themselves. Some worship a relationship. Some worship material possessions. All of us worship. We can't help it. Yet we are only satisfied when we worship the One who created us. So Jesus received the worship of the crowd as our great and good God.

Worshiping something other than Christ is always worshiping something less than Christ and something that will fail to deliver satisfaction and joy. Only when we bow our hearts before the Lord are we filled. Only when we surrender to the everlasting King are we at peace.

Because we are restless until we rest in the Lord, God's commands for us to worship Him are gracious invitations for us to enjoy real life. His commands for us to praise Him are loving commands because without them we would never be satisfied. We don't want the rocks to cry out in our place—we should want to cry out!

- **What are some things we are tempted to worship in place of Jesus?**

99 Essential Doctrines (p. 40, DDG)

Worship

While many reduce worship to an event or the singing of worship songs, worship is first and foremost something of the heart and extends to all areas of life. The aim and focus of worship is God, giving Him the exact due of praise and adoration that He deserves. Worship should be carried out not only at a personal level within a Christian's life but also in joining with other Christians in the corporate act of worship and stewarding our gifts for the glory of God. Corporate worship serves to edify and strengthen other Christians, but it also serves as a witness to non-believers of the greatness of God.

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
Jesus came to restore true worship.

Luke 19

35-40. For most of Jesus' life, He had remained hidden. His living in the rural backwoods of Galilee and working as a carpenter certainly didn't cause suspicions that history and time itself would bend around Him. Even in His ministry to the multitudes, He tended to command caution and discretion as if His mission was veiled in secrecy, but not this time. The time had come when Jesus would no longer quiet the crowds.

The voices of the chief priests and scribes issued their critique. Would this man really receive praise, honor, and glory in the midst of this temple built for God? It is a great question. Had Jesus been anyone else, we would celebrate the priests for their courage and discernment. But Jesus was not an imposter or pretender. Unlike the charade of worship typical of the temple, Jesus is the very face of faithfulness. He is the king who came to redeem His people, restore true worship, and receive all praise. He alone is worthy of the worship.

In Defense (p. 42, DDG)

Our culture views Jesus as a caricature; He is often pictured kneeling beside a group of children, carrying a sheep, or hugging a stranger. He is always happy and smiling. The idea of Jesus getting mad or sad is completely foreign to the version of the happy, hippy Jesus our culture often portrays.

Unlike these cultural caricatures, Scripture presents a Jesus of passion and humanity. However, unlike our frustration with school or responsibilities, Christ's frustration toward the businessmen dishonoring the temple came from a place of holy discontentment. Jesus was not offering a critique of fair trade or making a statement on economic policy, but was instead declaring that this was neither the time nor the place to be selling. He turned the temple upside down as a sign of cleansing, much like a person might take all the clothes out of a drawer in order to rearrange a dresser.

Jesus not only turned the tables on the money changers, but also on the hopes and expectations of the people. For as quickly as Jesus entered the temple, He departed as a sign that the prophecy was not yet fulfilled. Something else would have to happen before God and man could dwell together.

TEACHING PLAN

Read Luke 19:41-44.

Jesus not only received worship as God, He also claimed to be God when He said His visit to Jerusalem was God visiting (v. 44). God in the flesh rode up to the city on a humble donkey and He wept, not for Himself and the brutal treatment He would soon receive but for the consequences that would later befall the city because of their rejection of Him. Not only is Jesus the God who receives worship from His people but He is also the God who weeps for His people.

- **How should Jesus' weeping for Jerusalem affect our perspective of sinners who do not know Jesus by faith?**
- **On the scale below, mark your level of concern for those who do not know Jesus by faith?**

Apathy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **Urgency**

Read Luke 19:45-46.

Instead of helping people worship, businessmen were taking advantage of worshipers as they sold sacrifices to them for use in the temple. Vendors likely raised their prices and took advantage of travelers who had to buy animals for their sacrifices, hence, Jesus called them "thieves." The sellers could have set up outside the temple, but here they had disgraced God and disregarded the Gentiles by moving their marketplace inside the temple itself.

- **What are some ways we may hinder others in their worship of God?**

According to Jesus, the Father is seeking true worship (John 4:23-24), and Jesus seeks those who seek His Father's face. However, when Jesus entered the temple, He saw inauthentic worship. Rather than a place of gathering for the nations to pray, the temple was a demonstration of commerce with shimmering coins and cooing doves. Far from shining the glory of God, the temple glimmered with the glory of man.

Jesus was often angered by the hypocrisy of religious leaders who pulled people away from God with their self-centered traditions. He was gracious and gentle with those who were called "tax collectors and sinners" but fierce with those who gave the impression that they worshiped yet had hearts that were far from God. The temple scene that Jesus observed after entering Jerusalem angered Him because of the toxic mix of hypocrisy, people taking advantage of worshipers, and people preventing others from encountering God. God was being dishonored and people exploited, and all of this occurred in the place that was to be a house of prayer. So Jesus did something about it to restore the hope for true worship.

- **Does Jesus' reaction surprise you? Why or why not? How would you have responded if you were with Jesus or in the temple when this occurred?**

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
Jesus came to restore true worship.

Luke 19

41-44. "Jesus predicts the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, which took place in AD 70. Josephus [a Jewish historian] describes the walls and embankments built by the Roman general Titus (son of Emperor Vespasian) to besiege the city and prevent the escape of its inhabitants … Josephus portrays in great detail the terrible and gruesome suffering of the inhabitants of Jerusalem during the three-year siege of the city. Many died by a terrible famine. Others were killed by desperate bandits within the city. Thousands were slaughtered by the Romans when they breached the walls. Josephus claims that eleven hundred thousand perished during the siege and ninety-seven thousand were taken captive. Though the number is almost certainly grossly exaggerated (it may have been between one-quarter and one-half million), these numbers reveal the horrible sufferings the city will experience."[1]

Activity

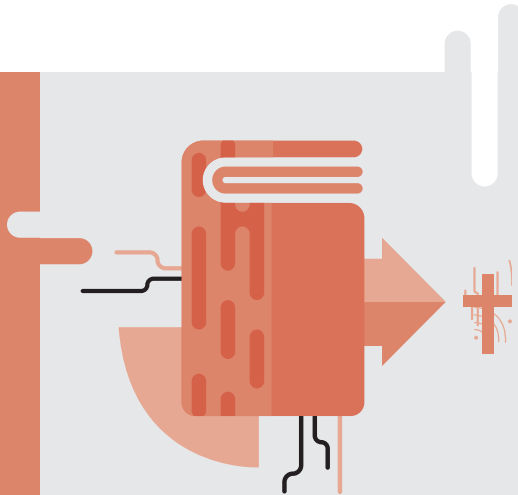
Give your students sheets of paper and ask them to fold the paper in half. One side should label "Wrong Worship Reasons." The other side should be, "Right Worship Reasons."

They should now fill in each side of the paper with either words or drawings appropriate to each side. They should imagine these sheets will be used as posters or bulletin inserts to help church members worship properly. In today's lesson, we saw people who worshiped Jesus, but for the wrong reasons. What might be some equivalent wrong reasons to worship Jesus today)? What might be some right reasons to worship Jesus?

Let them show their work and then debrief with a discussion. Chances are good the wrong reasons boil down to turning Jesus into a butler. Rather than Jesus being the final end and goal of our lives, we use Jesus for some other end or goal (like the people of Jerusalem wanted Jesus to bring them political freedom). Right worship adores Jesus for who He is; whatever He does will be right, whether it's pleasurable or painful to us in the short term.

(p. 41, DDG) Christ Connection

When Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, He fulfilled Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah and proclaimed He was the One who fulfilled them. The people praised Jesus, but they praised Him for the wrong reasons. In cleansing the temple, Jesus demonstrated how He would bring about true worship through offering His own body as a temple to be destroyed and then raised again.



JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM

Luke 19:35–46

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM

Jesus came to restore true worship.

JESUS CONNECTION

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LIFEWISE QUALITY

TEACHABLE – Being willing to change my mind and actions as I learn.

HEAD

Why did the people praise Jesus?

What did the people of Jerusalem fail to recognize about Jesus?

HEART

God's people had waited for thousands of years for the Messiah to come, but they didn't believe Jesus was that long-awaited Messiah because He wasn't what they expected. They wanted a king, but Jesus came to die humbly on the cross for sin. What are some ideas you have about who God should be or what He should do that keep you from believing in who Jesus says He is?

In Matthew 11:28-29, Jesus invited His hearers to be teachable, saying, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take up my yoke and *learn from me*, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." What does Jesus promise those who come with a teachable heart? How willing are you to let someone (such as God or a parent, teacher or coach) correct you or give you direction on how to do something in the correct way?

HANDS

Choose one option below:

1. Being teachable is not the same as being tolerant. *Tolerance* means accepting all ideas or views without declaring one to be right or wrong. Being *teachable* means knowing there is a right answer and, if you discover you are wrong, being willing to change your thoughts, beliefs or actions to match the truth. For each of these scenarios, think of a teachable response and ask God to help you put it into practice:

    - Your teacher corrects your answer in front of the whole class

    - The coach (or instructor) says you need to change how you do a skill or you won't advance

    - The principal challenges you for being disrespectful to a classmate in the lunchroom

2. Because of sin, every person will struggle to develop a teachable heart. We want to do things our own way, and we refuse to believe we are wrong, especially when it comes to having a relationship with God. Write down three actions you can do that would show you are ready to learn from Jesus. (*Examples: reading the Bible, memorizing verses, going to church or youth group, praying, etc.*) Choose one and commit to doing it every day this week.